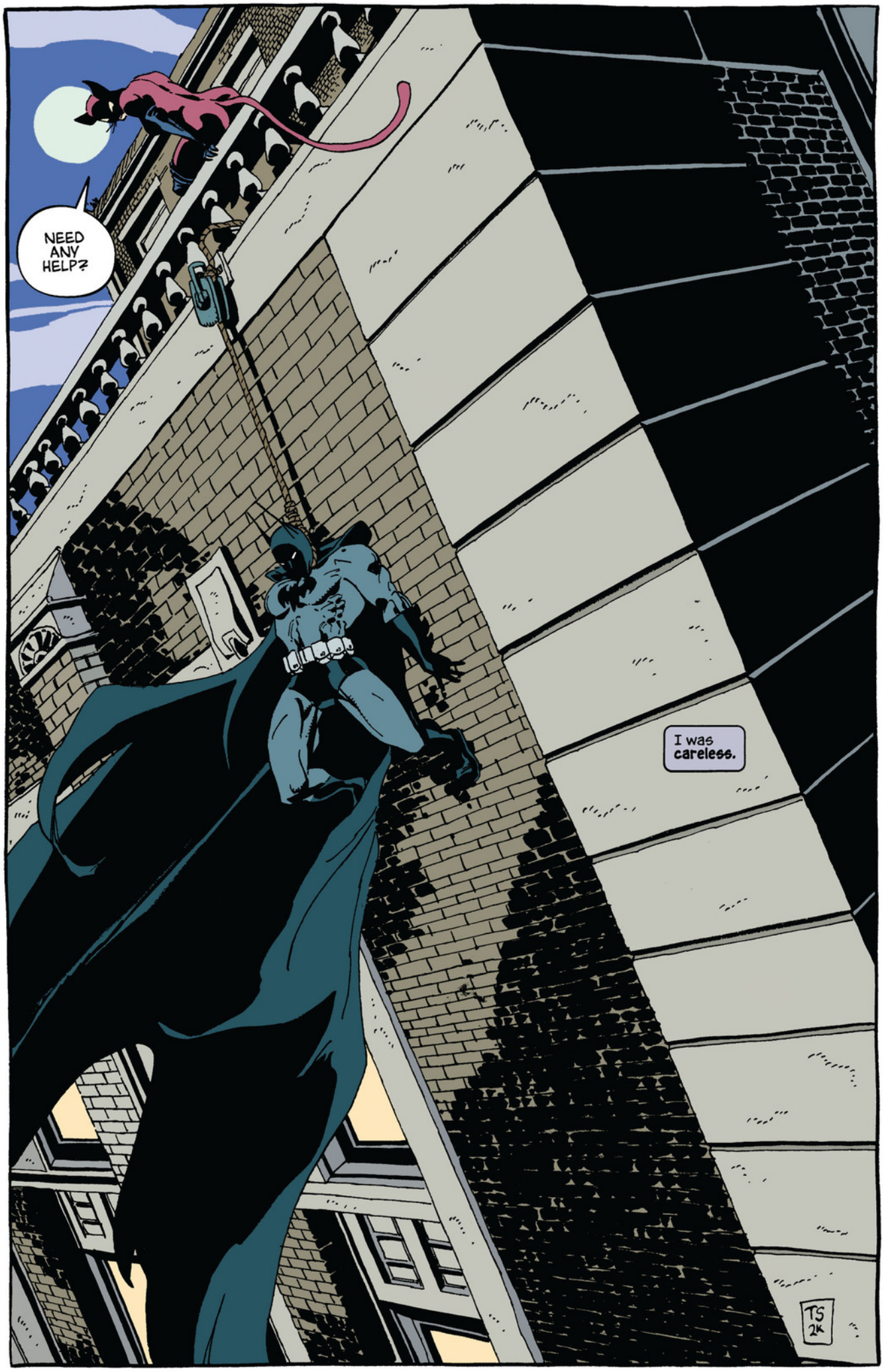
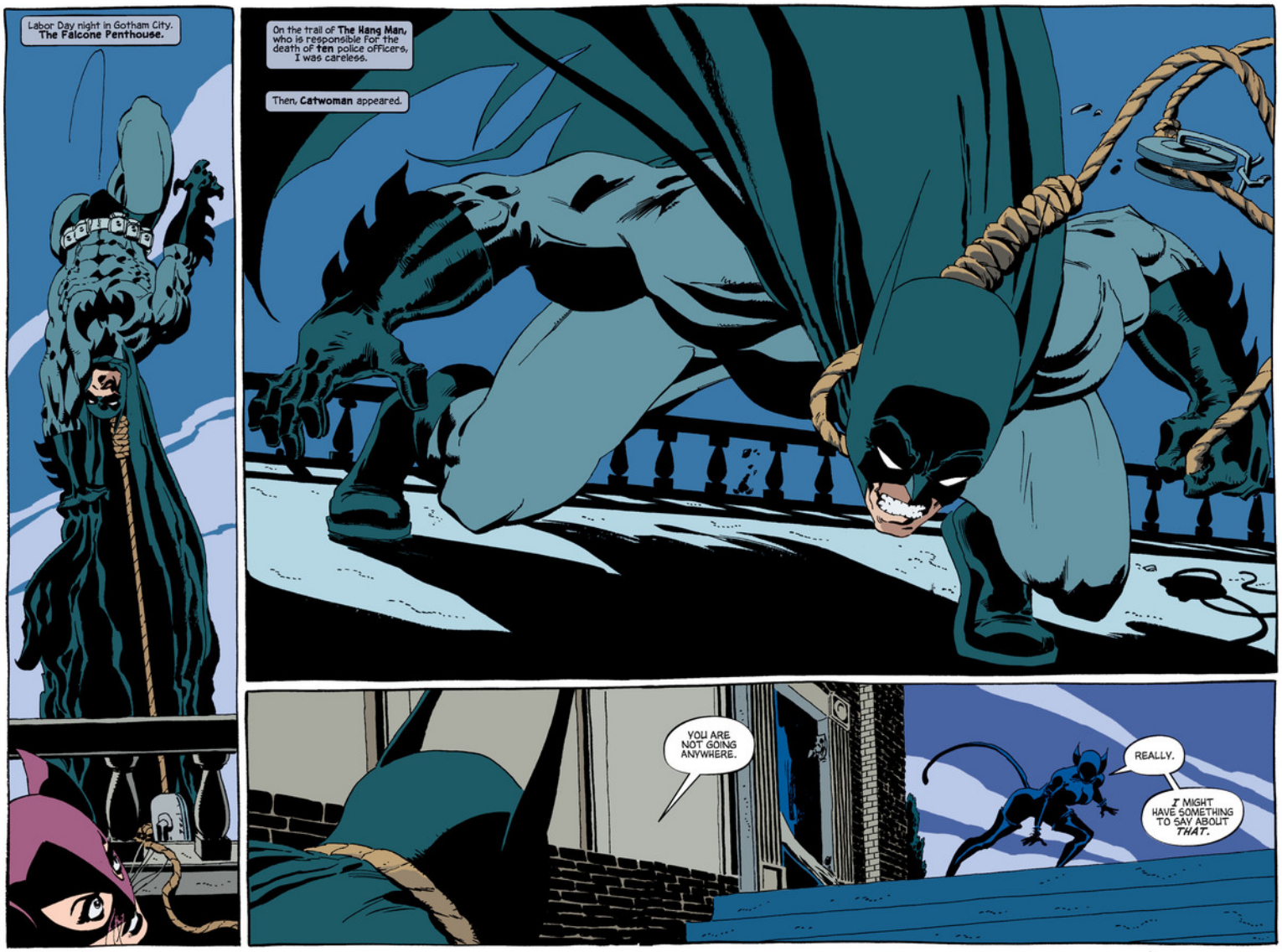
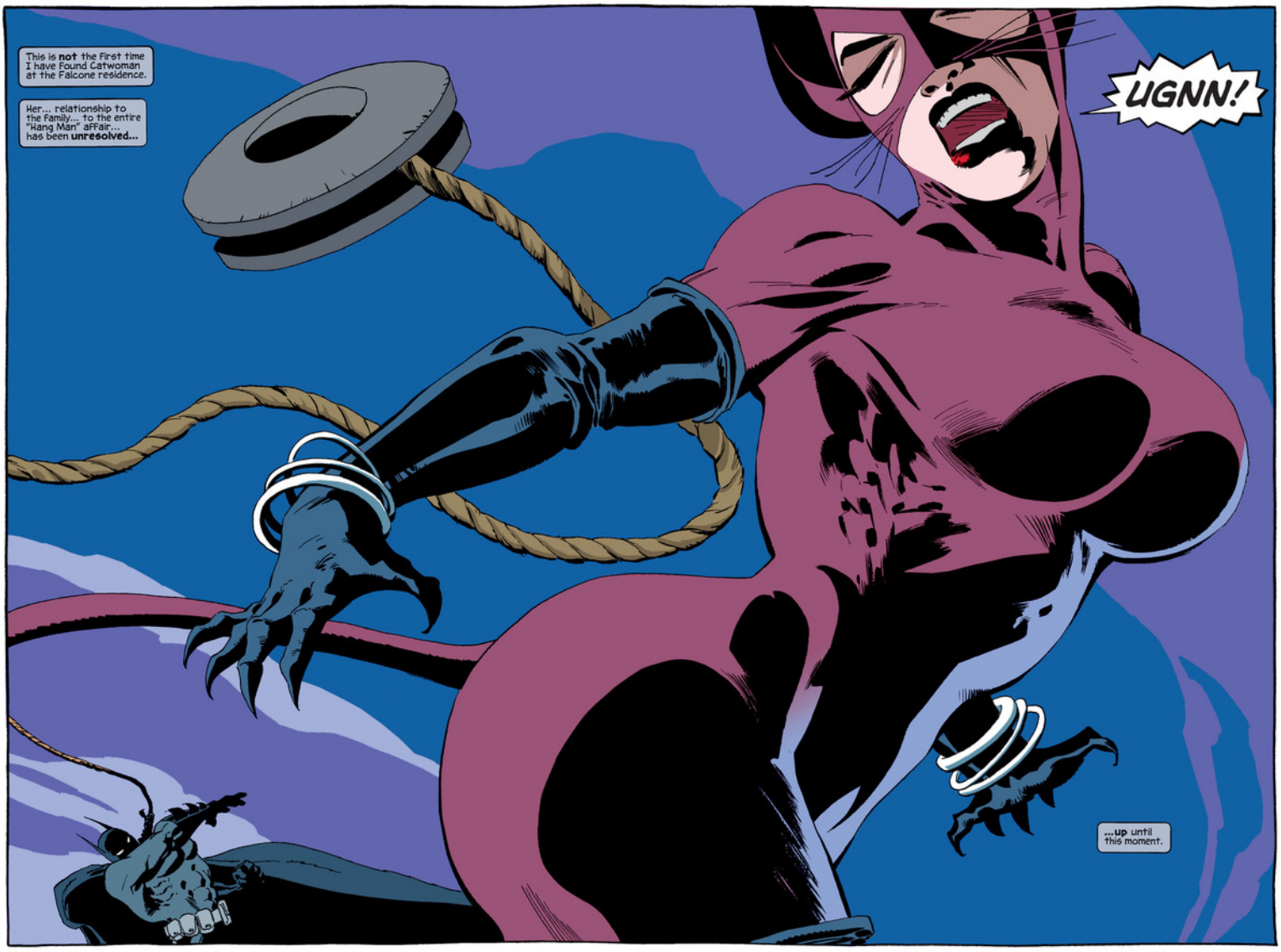
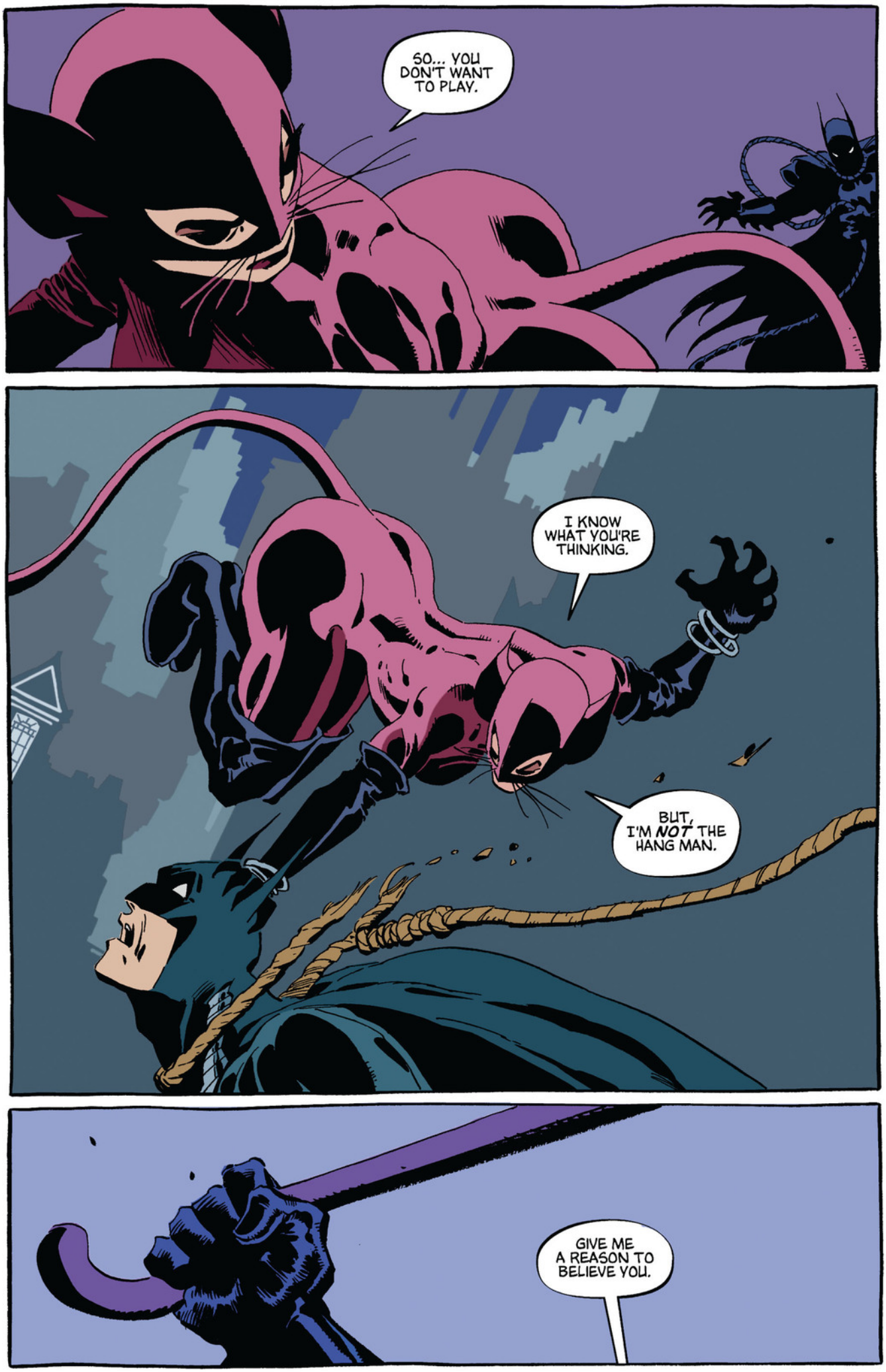
CHAPTER THIRTEEN PEACE

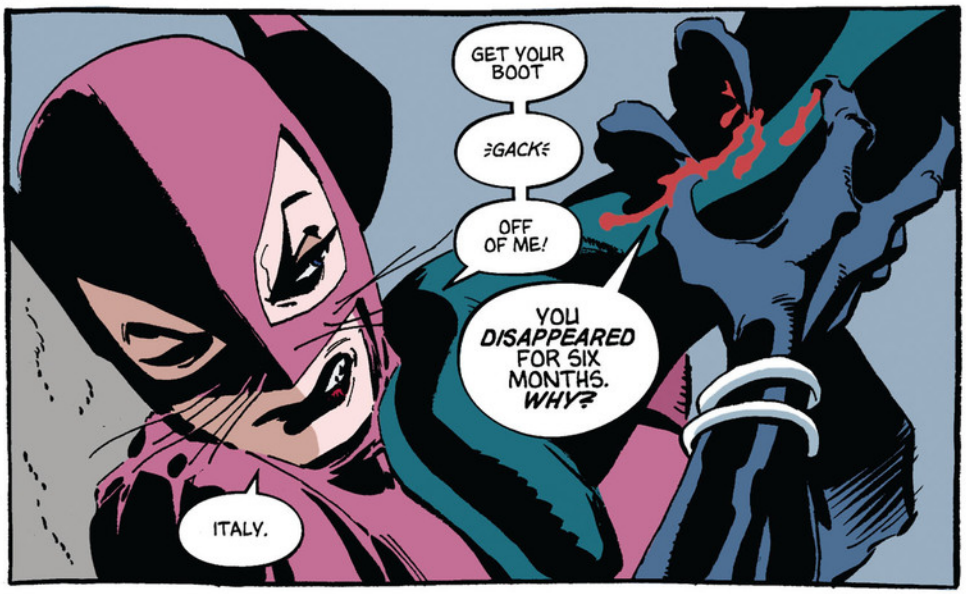

NEED ANY HELP?
I was **careless.**
TS 2K

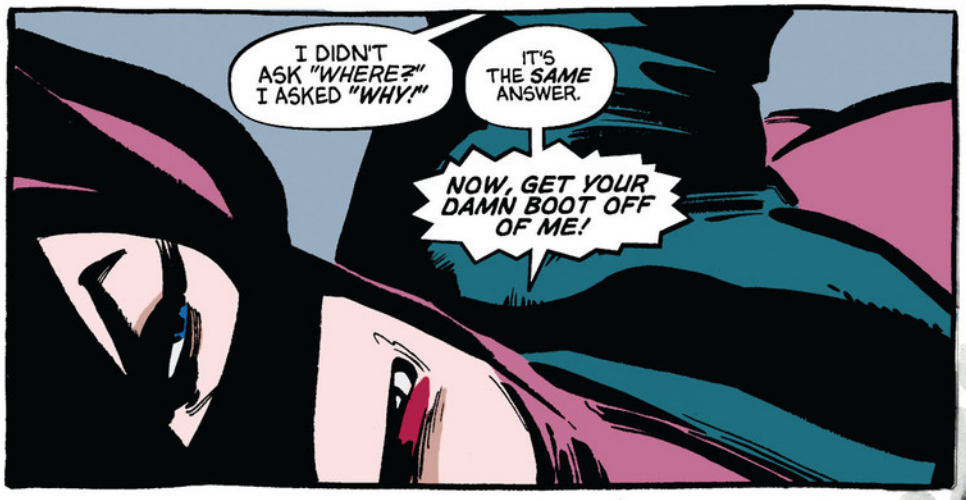

Labor Day night in Gotham City. **The Falcone Penthouse.**
On the trail of **The Hang Man,** who is responsible for the death of **ten** police officers, I was careless.
Then, **Catwoman** appeared.
YOU ARE NOT GOING ANYWHERE.
REALLY.
I MIGHT HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY ABOUT *THAT.*


This is **not** the first time I have found Catwoman at the Falcone residence.
Her... relationship to the Family... to the entire "Hang Man" affair... has been **unresolved...**
UGNN!
...**up** until this moment.


SO... YOU DON'T WANT TO PLAY.
I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING.
BUT, I'M *NOT* THE HANG MAN.
GIVE ME A REASON TO BELIEVE YOU.

I DON'T GIVE A DAMN --
OUGGH
-- WHAT YOU BELIEVE!
TELL ME WHAT YOU WERE DOING UP HERE TONIGHT.

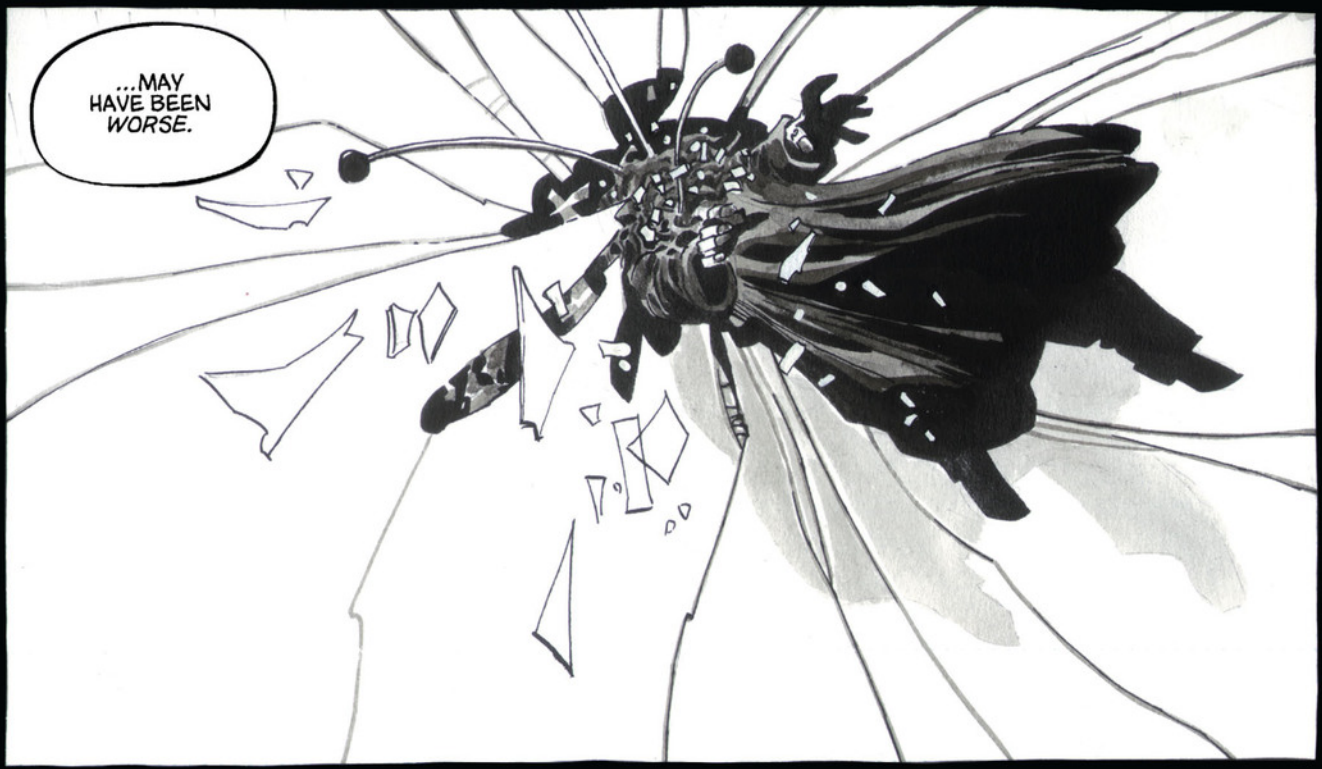

GET YOUR BOOT
GACK
OFF OF ME!
YOU DISAPPEARED FOR SIX MONTHS. WHY?
ITALY.


I DIDN'T ASK "WHERE?" I ASKED "WHY!"
IT'S THE SAME ANSWER.
NOW, GET YOUR DAMN BOOT OFF OF ME!

THE NIGHT KAFF HARVEY DENT KILLED CARMINE FALCONE...
...SOFIA FALCONE AND I FELL OFF THIS ROOF.
IN THE CONFUSION, I DON'T THINK YOU SAW -- I DON'T THINK ANYBODY SAW --
-- I SCRATCHED HER FACE --
-- THE RIGHT SIDE OF HER FACE...
...JUST LIKE HER DEAD FATHER.

SHE SHOULD HAVE DIED. BUT *MY* BOLA...

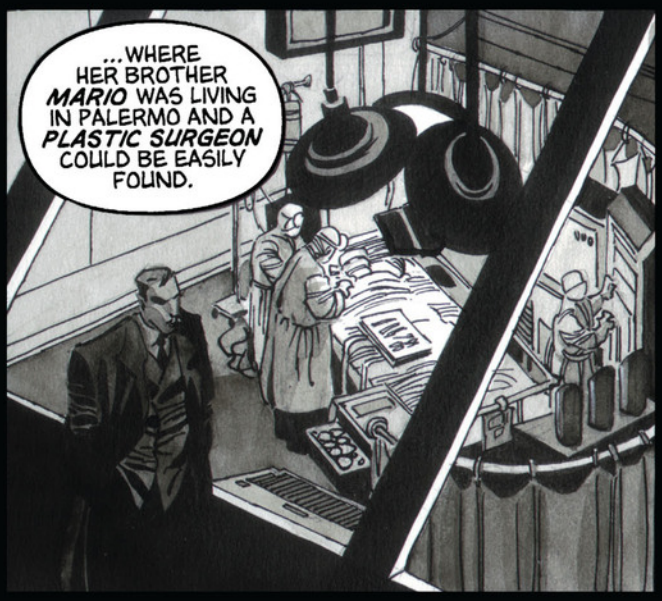
WHAT HAPPENED TO HER INSTEAD...


...MAY HAVE BEEN *WORSE.*

HER FACE... THE GLASS HAD SHEARED OFF THE *RIGHT* SIDE OF IT.

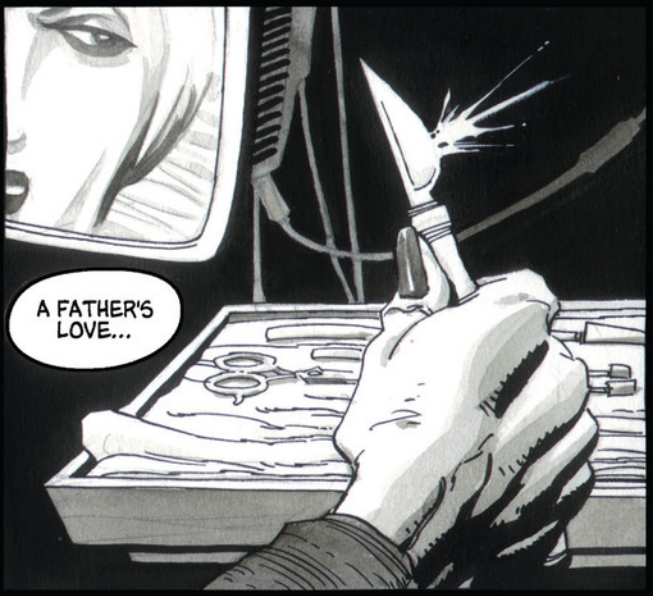
SHE WASN'T MOVING. SHE WOULD HAVE BLED TO DEATH IF *MR. MIRTI* HADN'T FOUND HER.

WITH THE POLICE ARRIVING, HE STOLE SOFIA SAFELY OUT OF THE BUILDING.
AND TOGETHER, I WOULD FIND OUT LATER, THEY FLED TO ITALY...


...WHERE HER BROTHER *MARIO* WAS LIVING IN PALERMO AND A *PLASTIC SURGEON* COULD BE EASILY FOUND.

PIANO. PIANO, ADESSO. VADO A LEVARE LE BENDE.

CHE BELLEZZA.

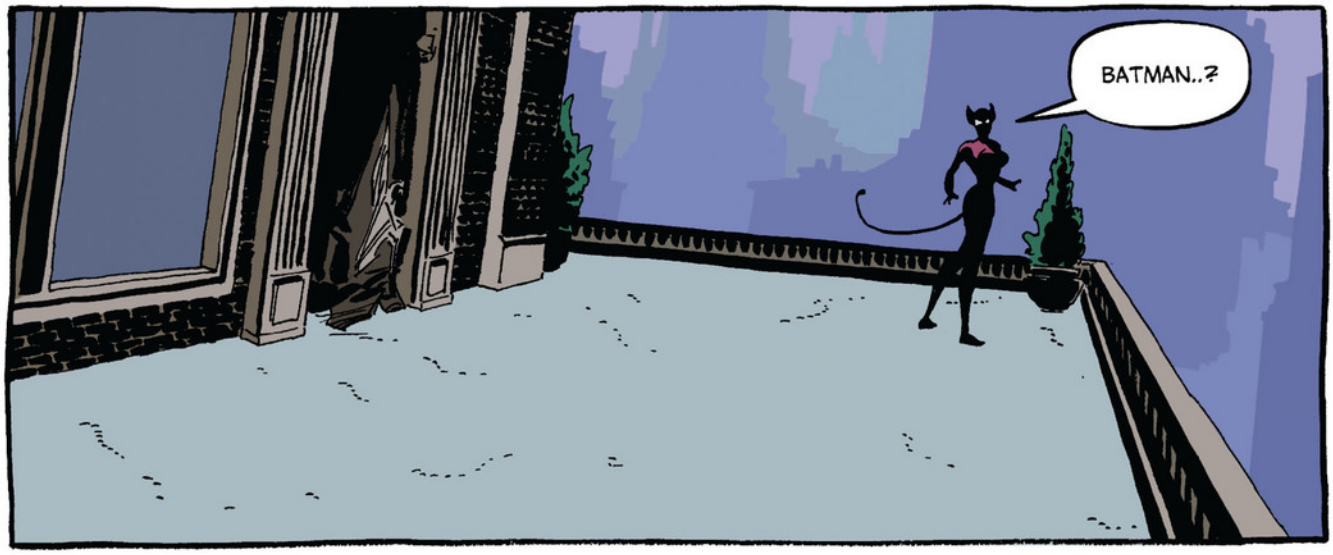

A FATHER'S LOVE...

...CAN BE A TERRIBLE THING...
POPPA...
NOW HE WOULD BE WITH HER *FOREVER*...

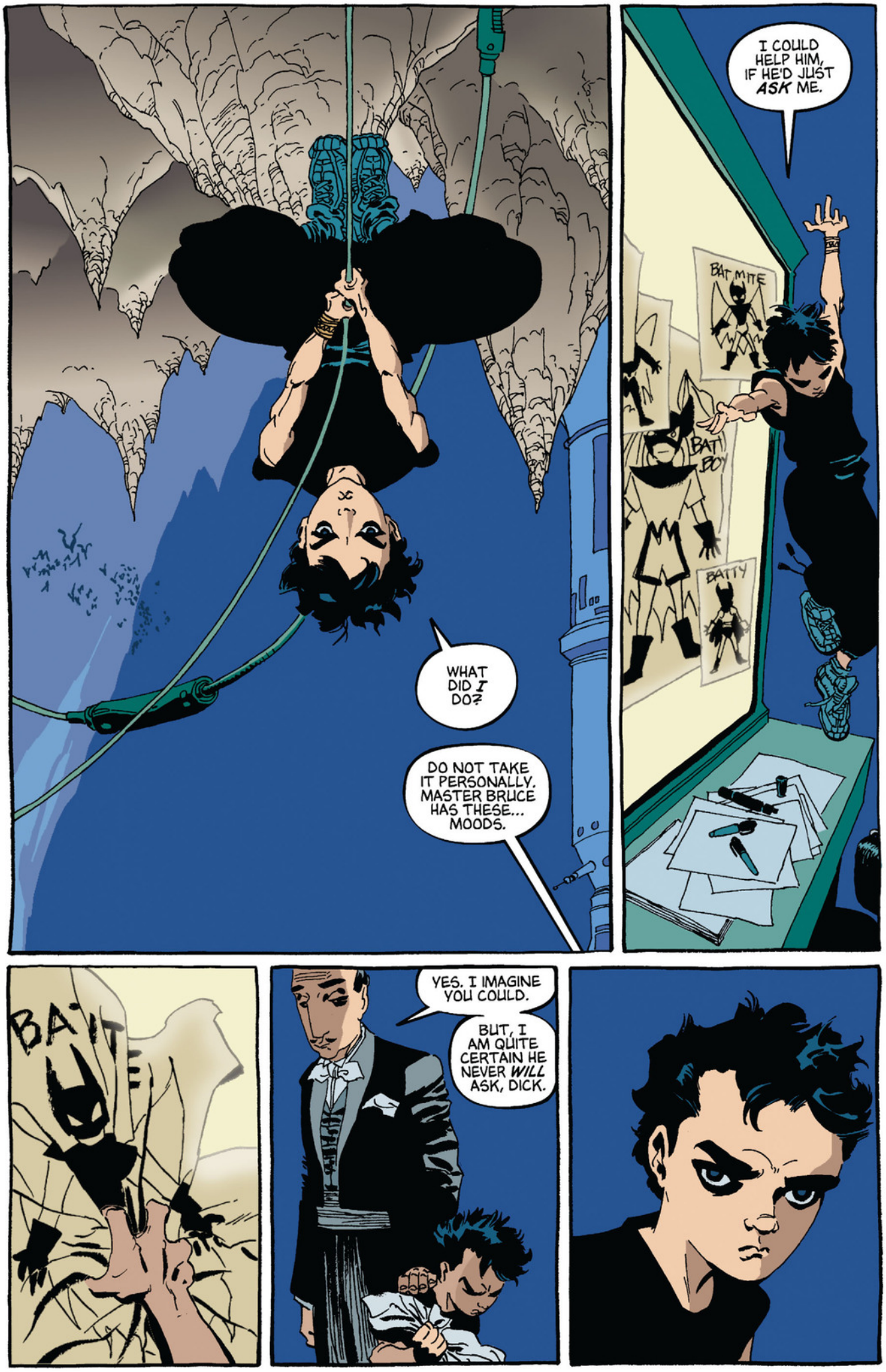
I TRIED TO FIND HER *ORTHOPEDIC* SURGEON...
I LOOKED AND LOOKED AND FOUND NO ONE.
WHY WOULD YOU GO THROUGH ALL THIS TROUBLE?
WHO IS *SOFIA FALCONE* TO YOU?

WHY IS IT SO HARD FOR YOU TO UNDERSTAND --
-- WHEN YOU *BLAME* YOURSELF FOR *HARVEY DENT* --
-- AND *YOU* DIDN'T EVEN THROW THE ACID.

HARVEY DENT WAS... MY FRIEND.
WHO IS SOFIA FALCONE TO *YOU*?


BATMAN..?

The caves beneath Wayne Manor. **The boy** has been training. I should **not** encourage him.
HEY. GUESS WHAT?
I was careless.
BAT MITE
BAT BOY
SPOOKY
I CAN DO A TRIPLE FLIP. HERE. INSIDE THE CAVE. WANNA SEE IT?
I NEED THIS REPAIRED. BY TONIGHT.
MY SUGGESTION TO WEAR THE NECK BRACE PROVED TO BE PRUDENT, AFTER ALL?
I'LL TAKE THAT AS A RESOUNDING "YES," THEN.

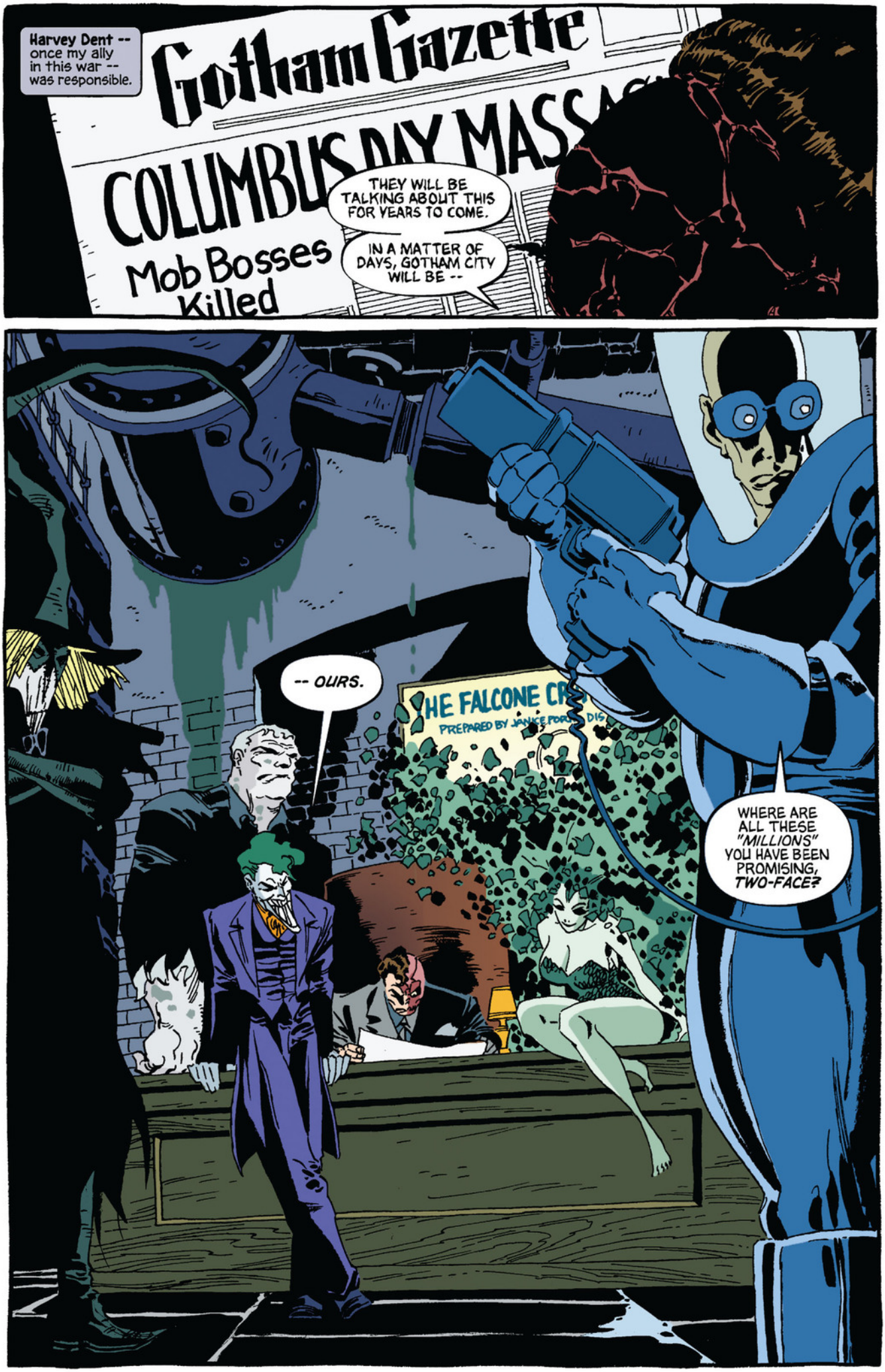

WHAT DID I DO?
DO NOT TAKE IT PERSONALLY. MASTER BRUCE HAS THESE... MOODS.
I COULD HELP HIM, IF HE'D JUST ASK ME.
BAT MITE
BAT BOY
BATTY
BAITE
YES. I IMAGINE YOU COULD.
BUT, I AM QUITE CERTAIN HE NEVER WILL ASK, DICK.

Columbus Day.
At precisely 2:00 a.m.
Umberto and Pino Maroni.

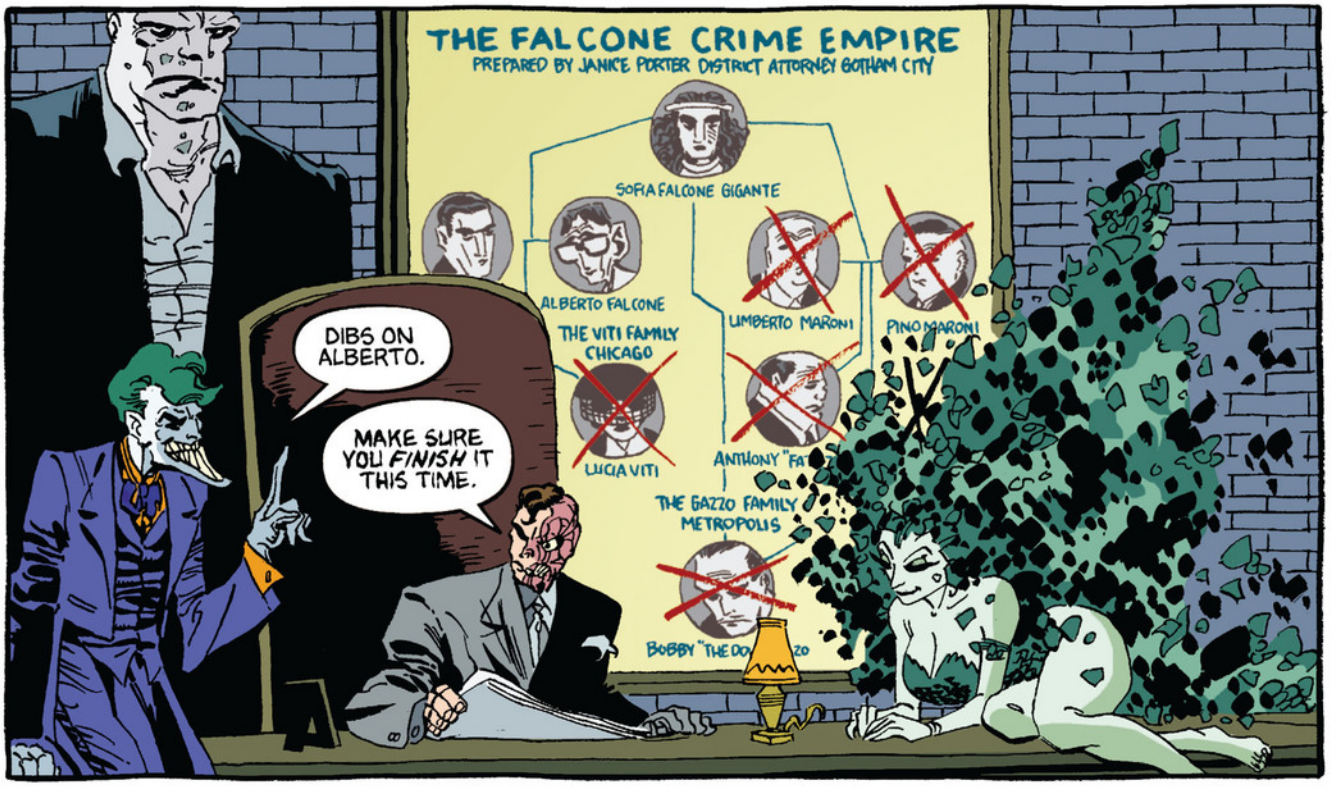
Lucia Viti.

SERVICE ENTRANCE
TIGER Room
Edward Skeevers.

Bobby Gazzo.
The heads of **Four** of the **Five** crime families were all murdered.

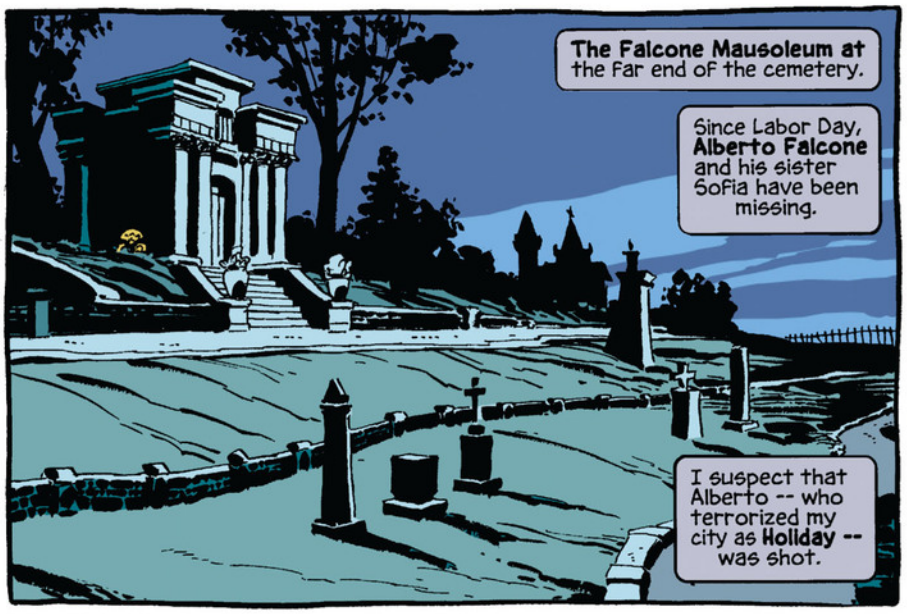

Harvey Dent -- once my ally in this war -- was responsible.
Gotham Gazette
COLUMBUS DAY MASS
Mob Bosses Killed
THEY WILL BE TALKING ABOUT THIS FOR YEARS TO COME.
IN A MATTER OF DAYS, GOTHAM CITY WILL BE --
-- OURS.
WHERE ARE ALL THESE "MILLIONS" YOU HAVE BEEN PROMISING, TWO-FACE?

THERE ARE ELEVEN WAREHOUSES FILLED WITH UNTRACEABLE LAUNDERED CASH THAT BELONG TO THE FALCONE FAMILY.
INFORMATION WHICH WAS PROVIDED BY THE LATE JANICE PORTER.
WHEN THIS JOB IS DONE, YOU WILL ALL GET WHAT YOU WERE PROMISED AND MORE.


THE FALCONE CRIME EMPIRE
PREPARED BY JANICE PORTER DISTRICT ATTORNEY GOTHAM CITY
SOFIA FALCONE GIGANTE
ALBERTO FALCONE
LIMBERTO MARONI
PINO MARONI
THE VITI FAMILY CHICAGO
LUCIA VITI
THE GAZZO FAMILY METROPOLIS
DIBS ON ALBERTO.
MAKE SURE YOU FINISH IT THIS TIME.

OH, DON'T WORRY, HARV.
I'LL LICK THE PLATE CLEAN.

Gotham Cemetery.
SUCH A WASTE...
JANICE PORTER
YOU'VE GOT COMPANY.
LOPEZ. HE'S HERE.
I APPRECIATE YOU COMING.
YOU SAID YOU WANTED TO TALK.
WHAT ABOUT, FALCONE?
I NEED TO KNOW YOU CAN GET ME ASYLUM AND IMMUNITY.
ASYLUM? FROM WHO?
FROM EVERYBODY...

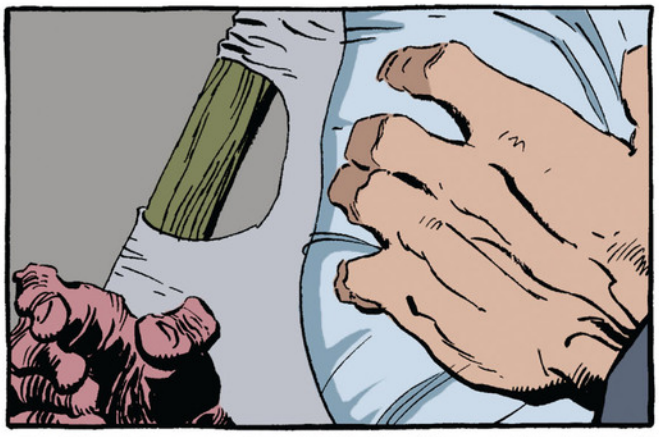

The Falcone Mausoleum at the far end of the cemetery.
Since Labor Day, Alberto Falcone and his sister Sofia have been missing.
I suspect that Alberto -- who terrorized my city as Holiday -- was shot.

He may even be dead.
PLEASE --
NO.
IF WE GO TO A DOCTOR -- ANY DOCTOR -- THEY WILL FIND US.

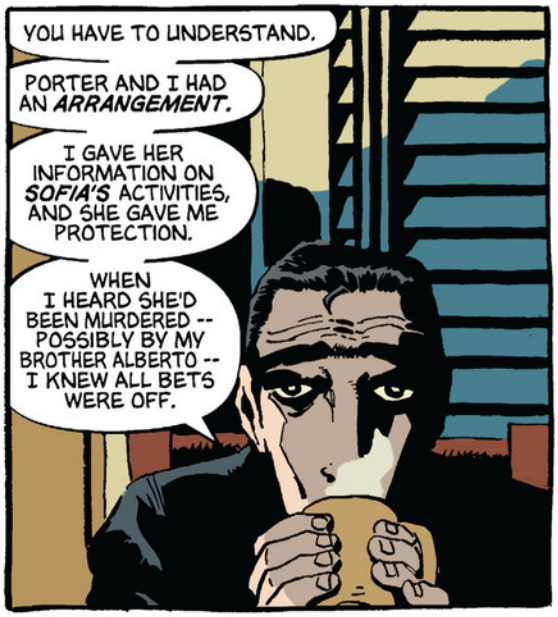
SO, THE CALENDAR MAN CLIPPED YOU WITH ONE LITTLE SHOT.
POPPA ONCE TOOK FIVE HITS -- RIGHT IN THE CHEST AND SHRUGGED IT OFF.
I AM NOT MY FATHER. I JUST WANT TO LIVE --

YOU'RE RIGHT, ALBERTO. YOU'RE NOT LIKE POPPA.
AND YOU NEVER WILL BE...

NOMMMMGG --



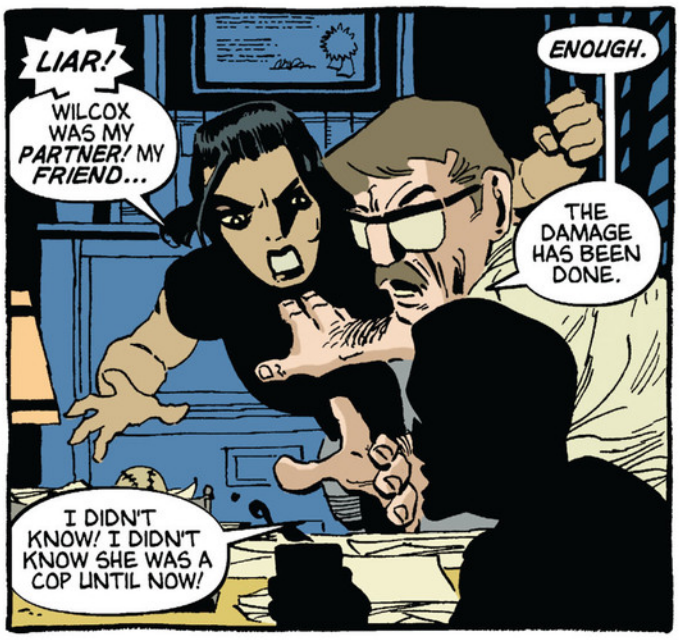
MARION
FALCONE
CARLA
FALCONE
VITI


YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND.
PORTER AND I HAD AN ARRANGEMENT.
I GAVE HER INFORMATION ON SOFIA'S ACTIVITIES, AND SHE GAVE ME PROTECTION.
WHEN I HEARD SHE'D BEEN MURDERED -- POSSIBLY BY MY BROTHER ALBERTO -- I KNEW ALL BETS WERE OFF.

PORTER TOLD ME WE HAD SOMEONE ON THE INSIDE -- SHE NEVER TOLD ME WHO.
WERE YOU HAVING AN AFFAIR WITH HER?
NO!
DID YOU KNOW SHE WAS HAVING AN AFFAIR WITH HARVEY DENT?
WHAT..?
...NO...

GOTHAM CITY
CAN I LISTEN TO THE TAPE OF THE COP WHO WAS HANGED AGAIN? WHAT DID YOU SAY HER NAME WAS?
WILCOX. DETECTIVE LAUREEN WILCOX.
ACK ...YOU..! GACK
...BUT... WE...

"...HAD A DEAL..."
THERE'S AN "L. WILCOX" ON SOFIA'S PAYROLL AND FOR BIG MONEY.
"...BUT WE HAD A DEAL..."

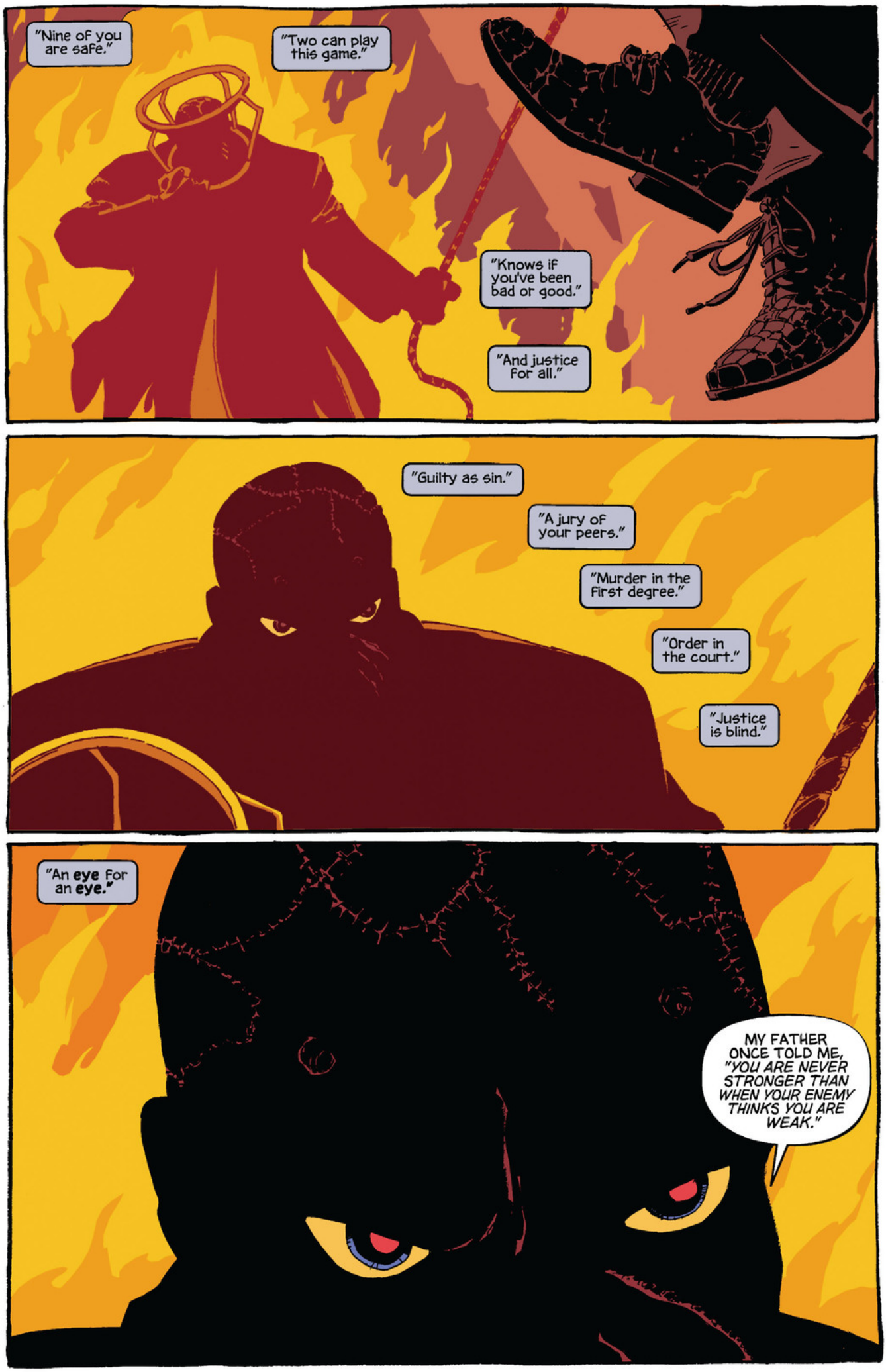

LIAR!
WILCOX WAS MY PARTNER! MY FRIEND...
ENOUGH.
THE DAMAGE HAS BEEN DONE.
I DIDN'T KNOW! I DIDN'T KNOW SHE WAS A COP UNTIL NOW!

SOFIA.
SOFIA GIGANTE IS THE HANG MAN.

GET DOWN!
THEY'RE TRYING TO KILL ME!
On the night he died, **Carmine "The Roman" Falcone** swore he would burn Gotham City to the ground before he would let "a freak" have it.
HAR-VEY-DENT.
HOLD ON, SOLOMON.
THE *REST* OF YOU -- TAKE THE TUNNEL HEADING *WEST*.
I'M GOING TO FIND OUT WHAT THE HELL HIT US.

In order to flush out **Two-Face,** the **unthinkable** has occurred.
The gas lines have been opened and set afire.
AHHHH!
Gordon has his hands full now, protecting the city.
TELL ME WHERE *TWO-FACE* IS OR I'LL THROW YOU BACK INTO THE FIRE.
Leaving **me** to do what needs to be done.

The **Riddler** was wrong. **Hang Man can** be played by one person -- **IF** you are not playing the game.
Dick was right. The **notes** left on the victims were **messages.**
=URK=
GAAAA!
Telling us The Hang Man's motive all along.


"Nine of you are safe."
"Two can play this game."
"Knows if you've been bad or good."
"And justice for all."
"Guilty as sin."
"A jury of your peers."
"Murder in the first degree."
"Order in the court."
"Justice is blind."
"An **eye** for an **eye.**"
MY FATHER ONCE TOLD ME, *"YOU ARE NEVER STRONGER THAN WHEN YOUR ENEMY THINKS YOU ARE WEAK."*

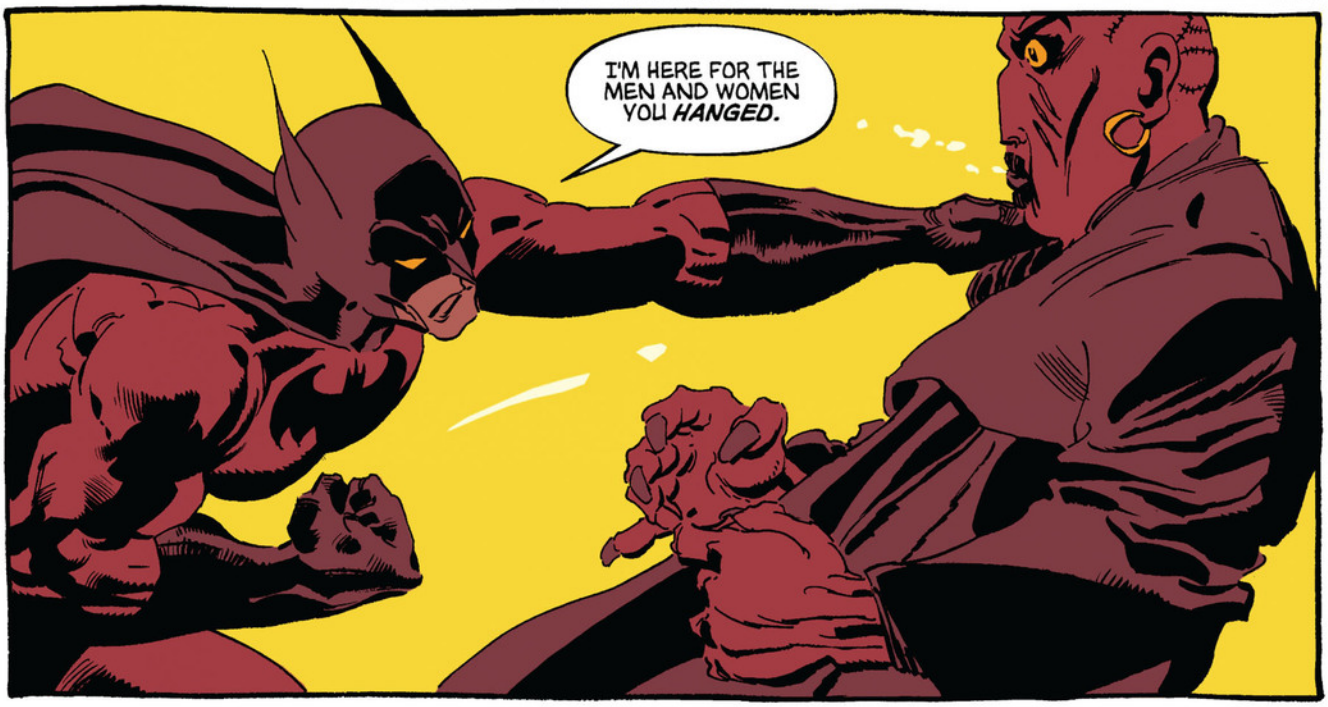
NOBODY LOOKED BEYOND THE WHEELCHAIR AT A *SUPPOSEDLY* CRIPPLED WOMAN.
Harvey Dent took the **one thing** that meant more to her than anything in the world.
In turn, Sofia set out to take from Harvey **anyone** who had helped him along the way.
...SOFIA..!
The cops. Even the rotten ones, from O'Hara to Gordon. Each helped build Harvey Dent's career as a crusading D.A.
Gordon's Task Force cops were killed, since they intended to stop the Hang Man and end Sofia's quest.
Making **Harvey Dent** nothing more than a fading memory.
"A Father's love can be a terrible thing..."

YOUR FATHER CAN ROT IN SACK

OOOPGH

Catwoman not being able to find Sofia's orthopedic surgeon.
BATMAN!
NO ONE ELSE DIES.
The scratches on Sofia's face telling us that she was not what she seemed.
YOU STILL PROTECT HIM?!
The clues that pointed to Dent, to Alberto, to Mario -- even to her dead father...
HE BETRAYED YOU AND THIS CITY. EVERYTHING YOU SAY YOU BELIEVE IN.
...all intended to misdirect any suspicion of her.

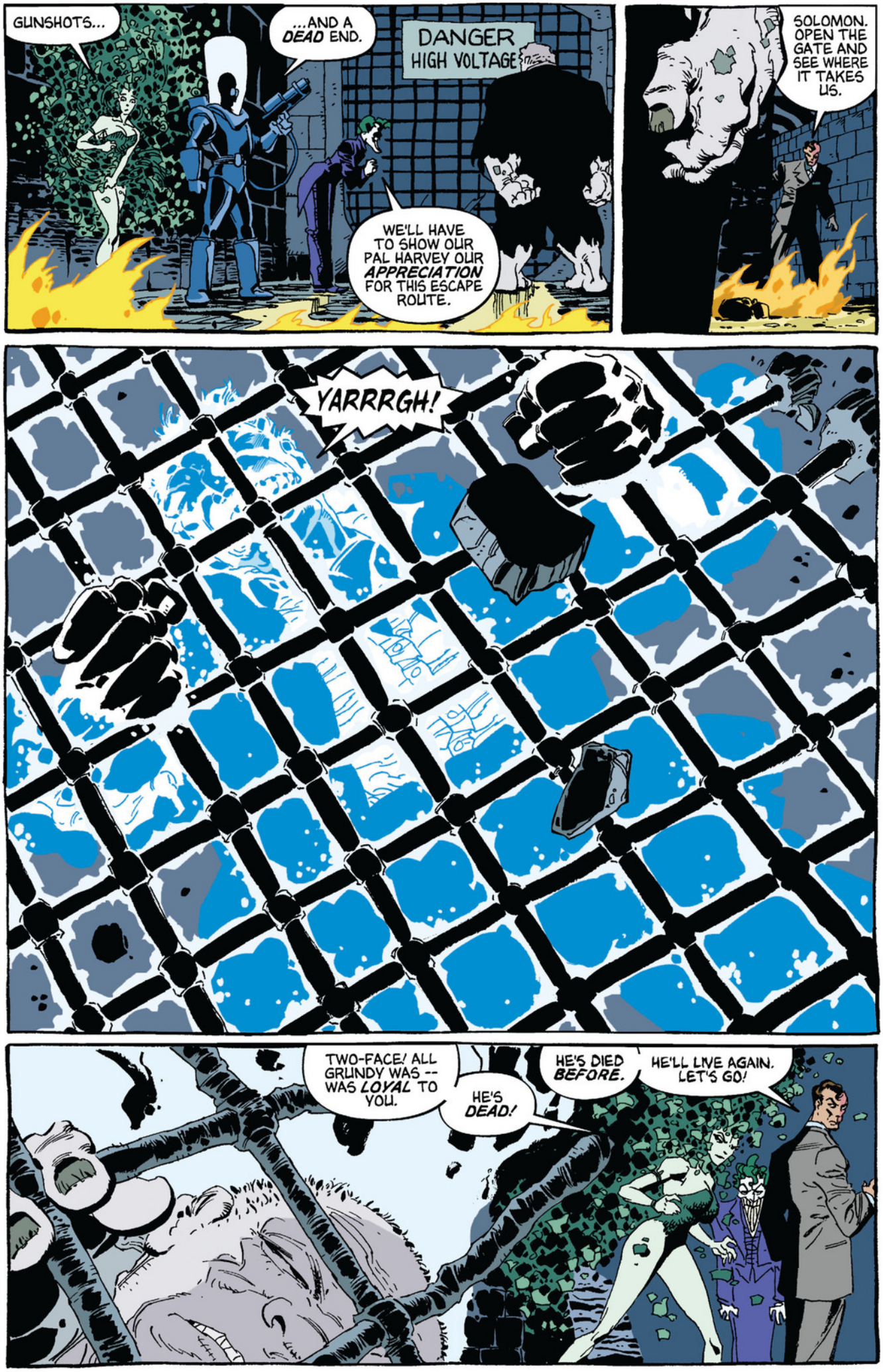
THIS ISN'T ABOUT *DENT.*


I'M HERE FOR THE MEN AND WOMEN YOU *HANGED.*

THE END OF THE FALCONE CRIME --

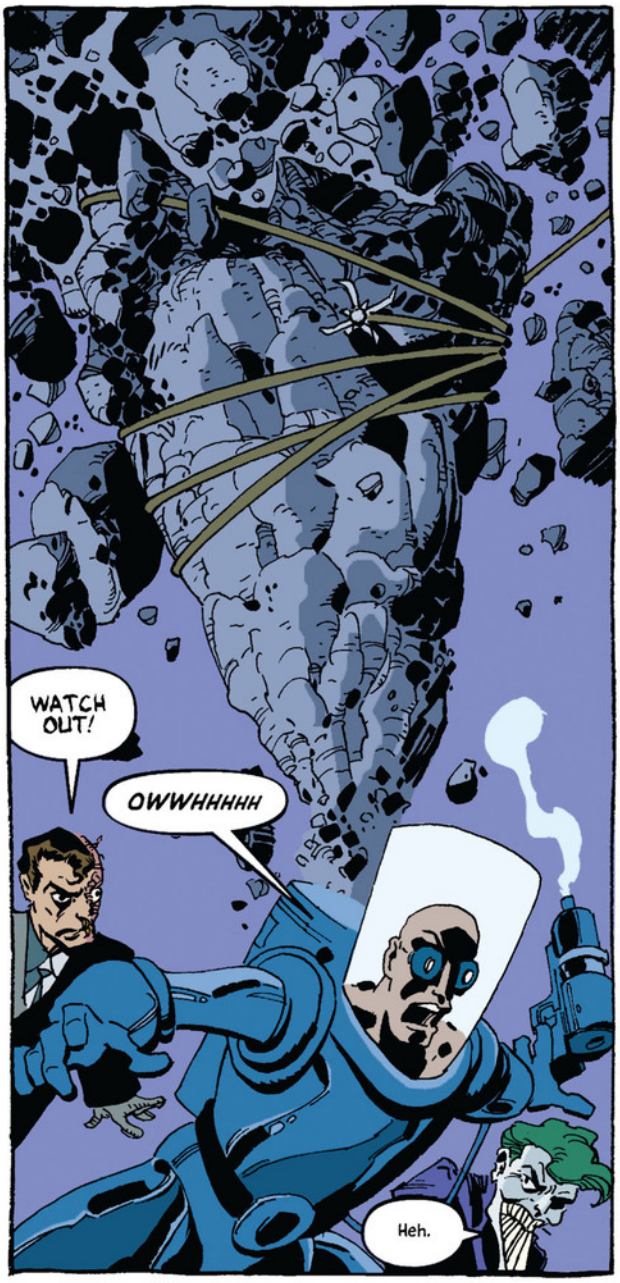
-- FAMILY...
...UHK...

YOU WANTED IT TO END, BATS.
SO DID I.
NOW, THERE AREN'T GOING TO BE *ANY* INSANITY PLEAS *THIS* TIME.


GUNSHOTS...
...AND A DEAD END.
DANGER HIGH VOLTAGE
WE'LL HAVE TO SHOW OUR PAL HARVEY OUR APPRECIATION FOR THIS ESCAPE ROUTE.
SOLOMON. OPEN THE GATE AND SEE WHERE IT TAKES US.
YARRRGH!
TWO-FACE! ALL GRUNDY WAS -- WAS LOYAL TO YOU.
HE'S DEAD!
HE'S DIED BEFORE.
HE'LL LIVE AGAIN. LET'S GO!

WHAT'VE WE FOUND...
...HERE..?

SHOWTIME...


WATCH OUT!
OWWHHHHH
Heh.

THERE'S SOMEONE ELSE DOWN -- NGGGNNN

Dick..?
...UH-OH...

OKAY, BATMAN! LET'S TAKE 'EM!
WHAT THE HELL IS THIS?!
SOME KID ALL BY HIMSELF.
I have to act swiftly. Get the boy to safety.

NOT ALONE, MISTER!
A DYNAMIC DUO!

I think about Gordon reminding me how Harvey Dent played cards with him...

...How they got drunk together...
...How Gordon insisted that **no matter** what he's become, Harvey **was** my friend, too.

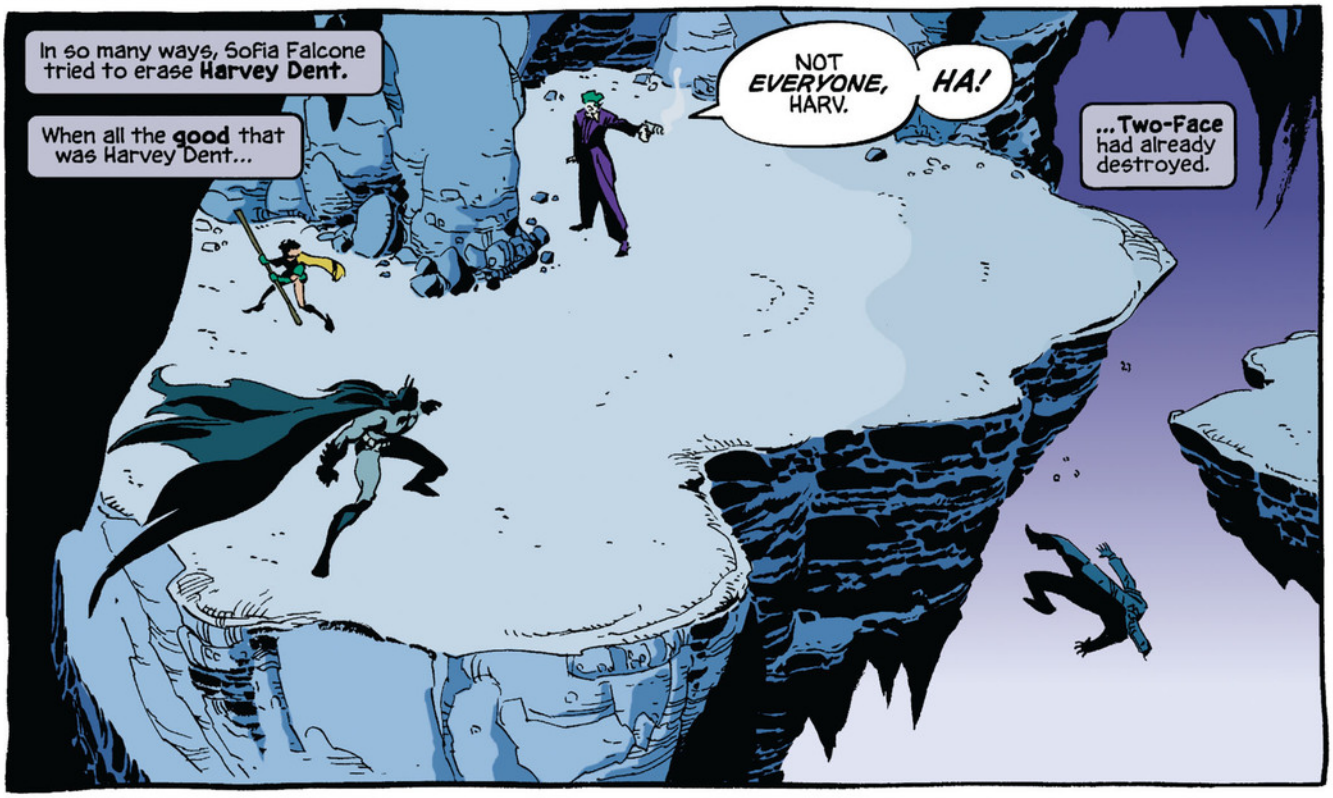
BATS.
STOP.

NOT THIS TIME.

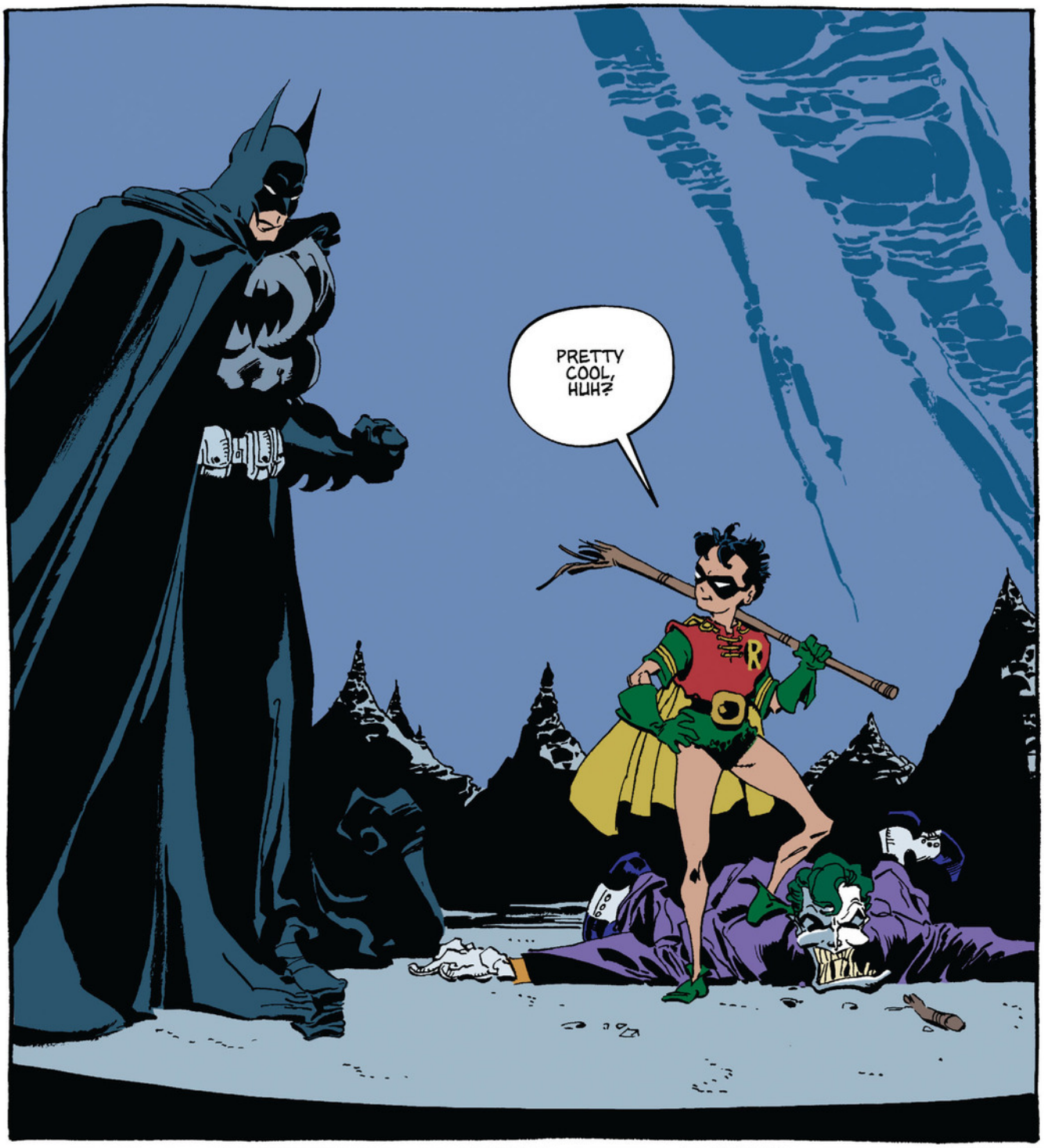
FOR THE SECOND TIME.
STOP.

BATMAN, I CAN --
STAY BACK, YOU!
GOTHAM CITY IS MINE NOW. EVERYONE ELSE IS DEAD.

BLAM


In so many ways, Sofia Falcone tried to erase Harvey Dent.
When all the good that was Harvey Dent...
NOT EVERYONE, HARV.
HA!
...Two-Face had already destroyed.

WELL. I WASN'T GOING TO LET HIM HAVE IT ALL.
FOR ALL HIS TALK, WHAT DID TWO-FACE REALLY WANT?
GETTING RID OF A BUNCH OF GANGSTERS.
SAME AS OL' HARV.
HE NEVER UNDERSTOOD GOTHAM CITY LIKE YOU AND ME, BAT --
SCREWBALL IN THE CORNER POCKET.
AGGG!

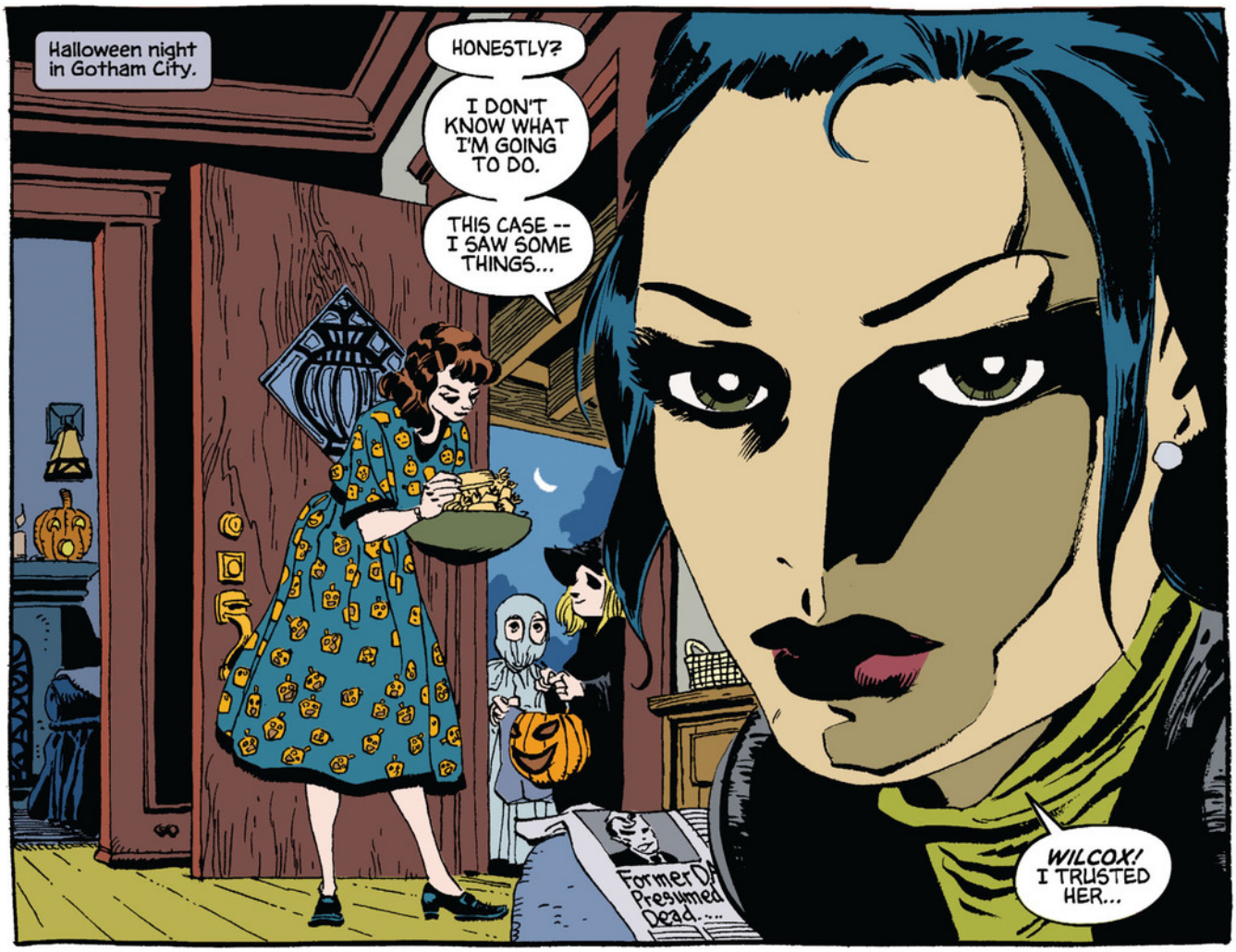

PRETTY COOL, HUH?

WHAT *IS* THAT YOU ARE WEARING?

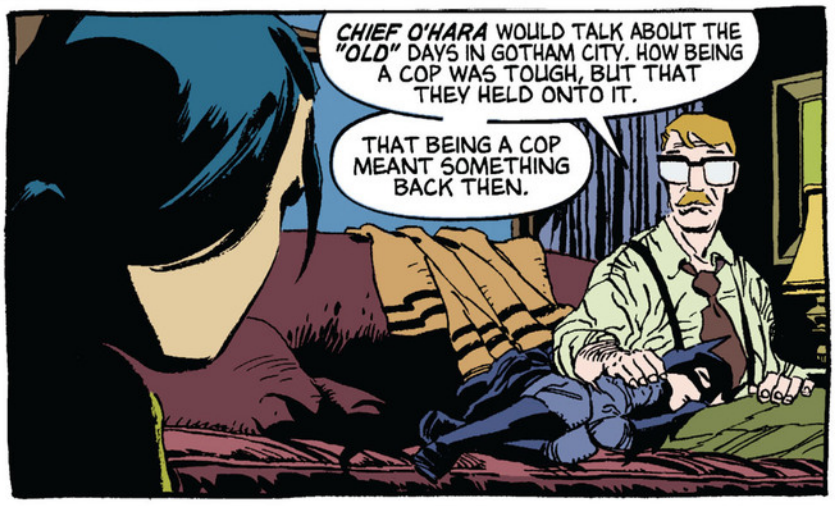
The sewer tunnels leading into the caves will be dynamited, so this never happens again.
It could have been much worse.
IF it wasn't For Dick...

The Gotham City Police Department. Rooftop.
DO YOU THINK THAT HE IS REALLY DEAD?
AS MUCH AS I CAN BE WITHOUT FINDING THE BODY.
IN ANY EVENT, THE MAN WE KNEW AS HARVEY DENT WAS *ALREADY* DEAD.
I UNDERSTAND YOU'RE WORKING WITH A *YOUNG PARTNER* NOW.
I'D LIKE TO MEET HIM SOMETIME.
YES. I AM.
AND... YOU WILL.

BATMAN.
I KNOW I DON'T SAY THIS VERY OFTEN...
...BUT, THANK YOU.
THE HANG MAN. SOFIA.
SHE KILLED A LOT OF COPS. *MY* PEOPLE.
WE COULDN'T HAVE STOPPED HER WITHOUT YOU.


Halloween night in Gotham City.
HONESTLY?
I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M GOING TO DO.
THIS CASE -- I SAW SOME THINGS...
WILCOX! I TRUSTED HER...

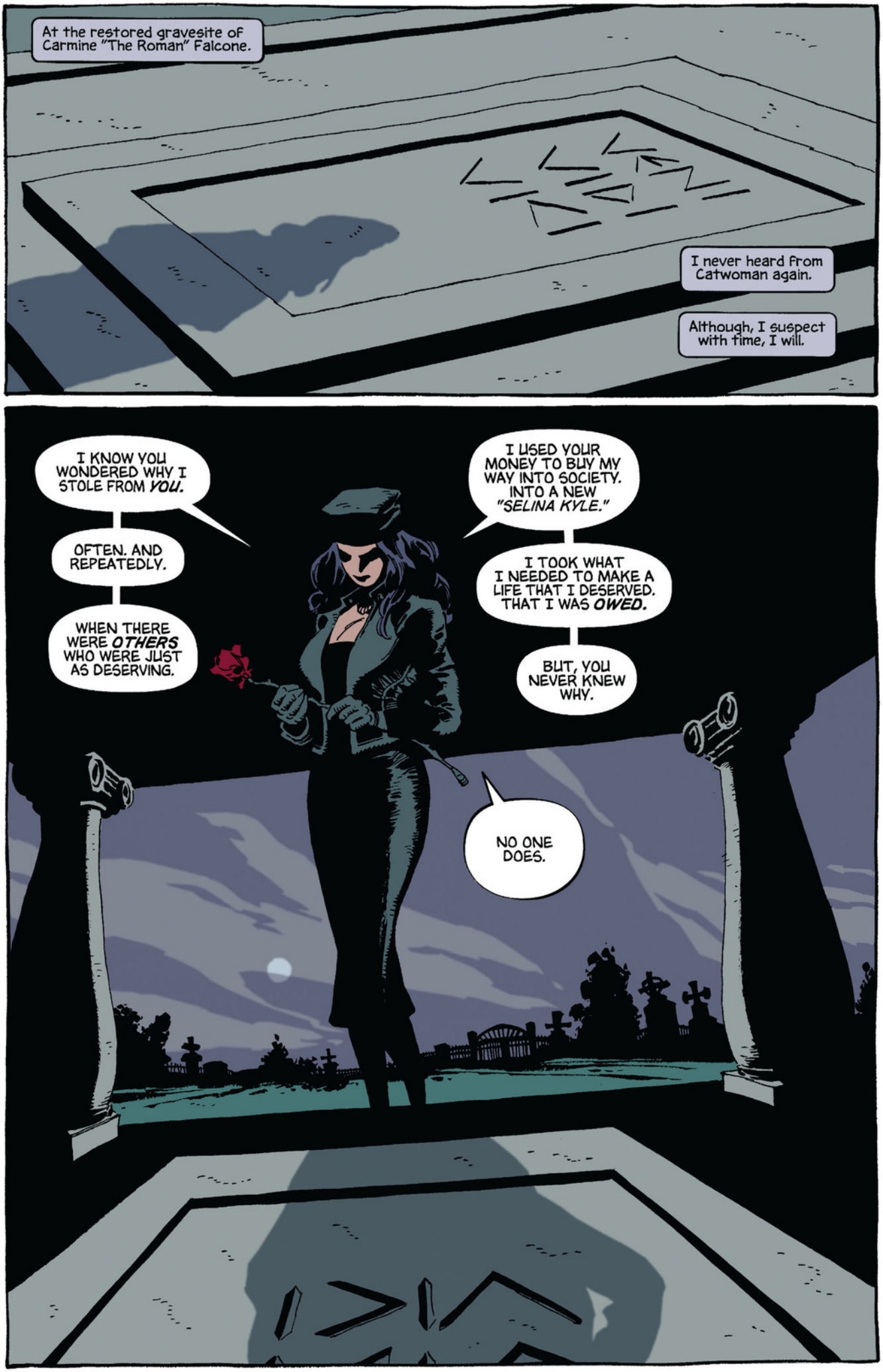
I CAN ONLY IMAGINE HOW YOU FEEL, JULIA.
IT'S BEEN A HARD YEAR FOR *ALL* OF US.


CHIEF O'HARA WOULD TALK ABOUT THE *"OLD"* DAYS IN GOTHAM CITY. HOW BEING A COP WAS TOUGH, BUT THAT THEY HELD ONTO IT.
THAT BEING A COP MEANT SOMETHING BACK THEN.

I THINK IT CAN AGAIN, *LOPEZ.* THE G.C.P.D. NEEDS GOOD PEOPLE.
AND I'M GOING TO BE LOOKING FOR A *NEW* CHIEF SOON.
I...

...I ALWAYS LIKED O'HARA....

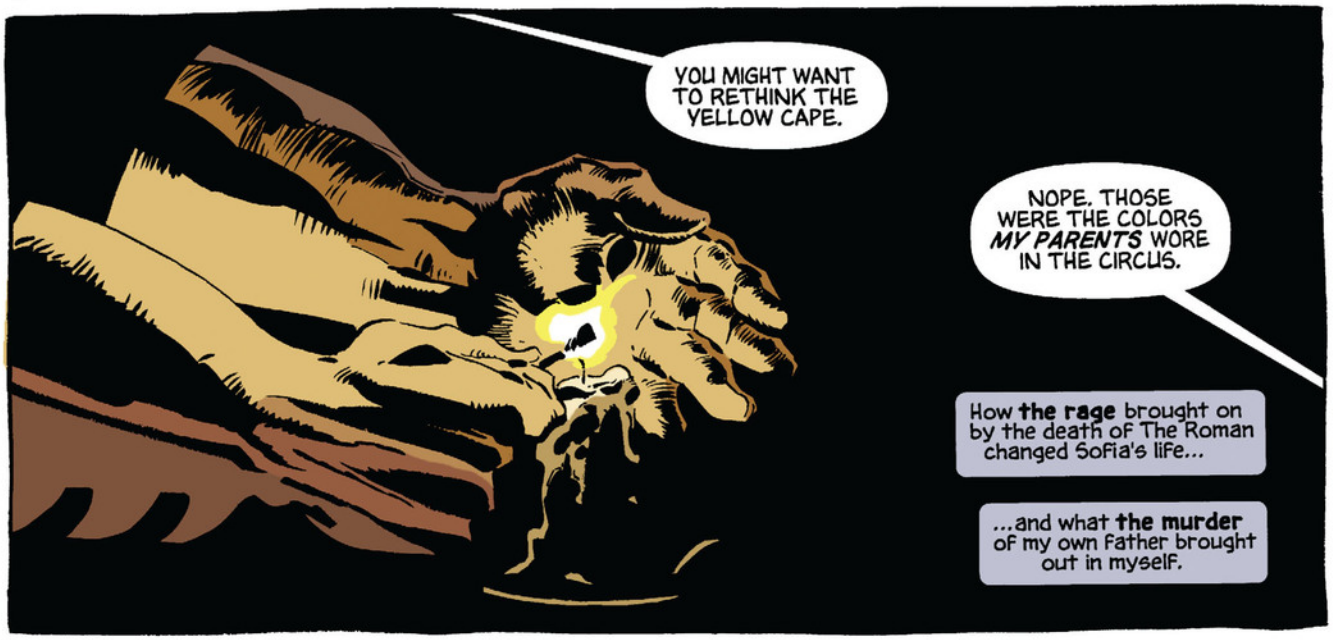
The Falcone Estate. After Midnight.
While burying Sofia, **Alberto Falcone's body** was discovered in the Falcone Crypt, along with **Harvey Dent's stolen Files.**
GAS
GAS
Harvey kept the Files **in order** -- from O'Hara to Gordon -- just like the victims.
Remembering that, **Two-Face** could come to Gordon's rescue on April Fool's Day.
We'll never know why, but I suspect it truly **was** to prove he wasn't the Hang Man.
Forensics found Alberto died of suffocation, not the bullet wound.
And, from the fingerprints, that **Sofia** -- his own sister -- was responsible.
I once believed that the end of the Falcone Organization would come with a broken woman in a wheelchair.
I was wrong.
It ended with a broken man.


At the restored gravesite of Carmine "The Roman" Falcone.
I never heard from Catwoman again.
Although, I suspect with time, I will.
I KNOW YOU WONDERED WHY I STOLE FROM YOU.
OFTEN. AND REPEATEDLY.
WHEN THERE WERE OTHERS WHO WERE JUST AS DESERVING.
I USED YOUR MONEY TO BUY MY WAY INTO SOCIETY. INTO A NEW "SELINA KYLE."
I TOOK WHAT I NEEDED TO MAKE A LIFE THAT I DESERVED. THAT I WAS OWED.
BUT, YOU NEVER KNEW WHY.
NO ONE DOES.

I SPENT SIX MONTHS IN ITALY TRYING TO FIND A PIECE OF PAPER THAT WOULD PROVE WHAT I BELIEVE IS TRUE.
THERE WAS NOTHING. I KNOW YOU ARE MY REAL FATHER, BUT I CAN NEVER PROVE IT.
MY HISTORY IS AS EMPTY AS THIS GRAVE.
SO, THIS IS GOODBYE.
WE NEVER SPOKE WHILE YOU WERE ALIVE, SO I DON'T SEE MUCH REASON IN STARTING NOW.

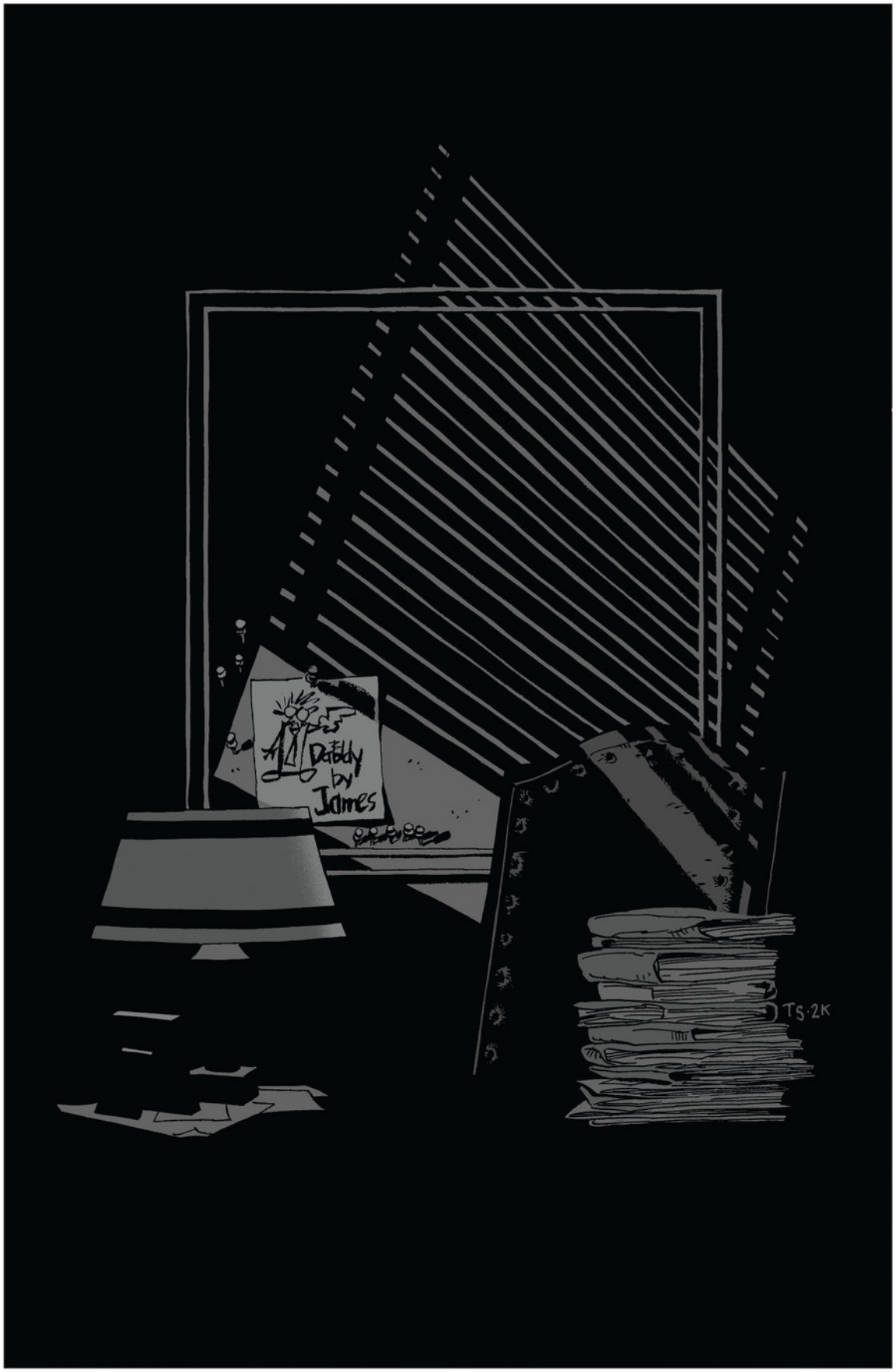
Alfred called it once, "A world without Harvey Dent."
It is a better world for that.

I CAN'T CHANGE YOUR MIND.
NO WAY.
Deep within the caves beneath my Father's house, I remember what Catwoman said.
"A Father's love can be a terrible thing..."


YOU MIGHT WANT TO RETHINK THE YELLOW CAPE.
NOPE. THOSE WERE THE COLORS *MY PARENTS* WORE IN THE CIRCUS.
How **the rage** brought on by the death of The Roman changed Sofia's life...
...and what **the murder** of my own Father brought out in myself.

AND WHAT IS IT YOU WANT TO CALL YOURSELF?
"ROBIN."
Now, I see in Dick the chance to help him cope with his own loss...
...and guide him into being a better man for it.

BATMAN AND ROBIN.
I made a promise to my parents that I would rid the city of the evil that took their lives.
That remains unchanged. Only now...
...I am no longer alone.
LOEB SALE 2000


Daddy
by
James
TS·2K

"Writer Jeph Loeb's brilliance shines through."
—IGN

"DARK VICTORY owes more to the Godfather films and various mob pictures than it does your standard cape-and-costume fare."
—David S. Goyer
(screenwriter for *The Dark Knight Rises* and *Man of Steel*)

Set in early days of the Dark Knight's career, Batman must stop the elusive cop killer "Hangman" before the murderer strikes again. A children's game pinned to each of the victims is the only clue to the Hangman's identity.

A rogues gallery of villains are prime suspects — Two-Face, the Joker, the Riddler, Catwoman.

Even the police force, led by newly appointed Commissioner Jim Gordon, cannot be trusted.

In order to solve this crime, Batman must look to a most unexpected place:

An orphaned boy who will change his life forever.

They will be known as Batman and Robin, and this is their story.

BATMAN: DARK VICTORY is a stunning murder mystery from the highly acclaimed and Eisner Award-winning team of Jeph Loeb and Tim Sale (SUPERMAN: FOR ALL SEASONS, BATMAN: THE LONG HALLOWEEN). This edition includes two story pages not in the original series and an introduction by *The Dark Knight Rises* co-writer David S. Goyer.
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